

**CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE HABITAT RELATIONSHIPS SYSTEM**  
**maintained by the**  
**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**  
**and supported by the**  
**CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY WILDLIFE TASK GROUP**  
**Database Version 8.1 (2005)**

---

B425 Orange-crowned Warbler *Vermivora celata*  
Family: Parulidae Order: Passeriformes Class: Aves

Written by: M. Green  
Reviewed by: L. Mewaldt  
Edited by: R. Duke, D. Winkler

#### DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

A common breeding resident, transient, and migrant. Uncommon in winter in central California (McCaskie et al. 1979), but fairly common in winter in southern California (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Breeds west of Sierra Nevada crest in mountains and foothills below about 900 m (3000 ft). Breeds in chaparral, coastal scrub, valley foothill hardwood, riparian, and perhaps above 1500 m (5000 ft) east of the Sierra Nevada crest in brushy stages of eastside pine habitat (Gaines 1977b). After breeding, found in all montane habitats; a substantial postbreeding, upslope dispersal occurs, which has led to reports of breeding in the transition zone and other montane habitats (Gaines 1977b). Winters in lowlands in chaparral and riparian habitats. A common resident on Channel Islands (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Fairly common fall, and common spring, migrant on Farallon Islands (DeSante and Ainley 1980).

#### SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

**Feeding:** Eats mostly insects; also eats seeds, small fruits, plant galls, nectar, and tree sap. Usually feeds 1.5 to 9.1 m (5-30 ft) above ground in shrubs and small trees. Gleans and hovers (Bent 1953). May visit hummingbird feeders; regularly feeds at sapsucker drillings (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

**Cover:** Shrubs and trees in chaparral, brushy stages of woodlands, forests, and riparian habitats provide cover.

**Reproduction:** Breeds in dense, brushy habitats. Nests on ground in brushy cover, or in shrub less than 1 m (3 ft) above ground.

**Water:** Observed drinking occasionally in a coastal oak woodland (Williams and Koenig 1980).

**Pattern:** Frequents dense shrub growth for breeding. Forages in open to dense brushy areas, and in open woodlands with brush understory.

#### SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

**Activity Patterns:** Yearlong, diurnal activity. Nocturnal migrant.

**Seasonal Movements/Migration:** Spring migrants usually arrive in California by late March from wintering grounds in Mexico, becoming common in lowlands throughout the state in April. Common in mountains by July. Most have departed northern California by mid-October, but a few regularly overwinter. In southern California, remains fairly common in winter.

Home Range: In Los Angeles Co. coastal chaparral, a male had a home range of about 2 ha (5 ac) (Mans 1961).

Territory: No data found. Breeding density in males per 40 ha (100 ac) reported as: 42 in a logged Douglas-fir stand reseeded to Monterey pine in Marin Co. (Evens 1975), and 16 in California bay-Bishop pine mixed forest in Marin Co. (Stewart 1974).

Reproduction: Breeds from mid-April to mid-July. Pair nests solitarily. Lays 3-6 eggs, usually 4 or 5. One brood of altricial young raised per yr (Harrison 1978). Young breed the following yr.

Niche: Subject to predation from small mammals, accipiters, corvids, and snakes.

## REFERENCES

- Bent, A. C. 1953. Life histories of North American wood warblers. U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 203. 734pp.
- Chapman, F. M. 1907. The warblers of America. Appleton and Co., New York. 306pp.
- Desante, D. F., and D. G. Ainley. 1980. The avifauna of the South Farallon Islands, California. Studies in Avian Biol. No. 4. Cooper Ornithol. Soc., Lawrence, KA. 104pp.
- Ehrlich, P. R., D. S. Dobkin, and D. Wheye. 1988. The birder's handbook. Simon and Schuster, New York. 785pp.
- Evens, J. G. 1975. Logged Douglas-Fir reseeded with Monterey pine. Pages 1127-1128 in W. T. Van Velzen, ed. Thirty-ninth breeding bird census. Am. Birds 29:1080-1145.
- Gaines, D. 1977b. Birds of the Yosemite Sierra. California Syllabus, Oakland. 153pp.
- Garrett, K., and J. Dunn. 1981. Birds of southern California. Los Angeles Audubon Soc. 408pp.
- Griscom, L., and A. Sprunt, Jr. 1957. The warblers of America. Devin-Adair Co., New York. 356pp.
- Harrison, C. 1978. A field guide to the nests, eggs and nestlings of North American birds. W. Collins Sons and Co., Cleveland, OH. 416pp.
- Harrison, C. J. O., ed. 1978. Bird families of the world. Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York. 264pp.
- Mans, M. L. 1961. Coastal chaparral. Page 514-515 in G. A. Hall, ed. Twenty-fifth breeding bird census. Aud. Field Notes 15:500-524.
- McCaskie, G., P. De Benedictis, R. Erickson, and J. Morlan. 1979. Birds of northern California, an annotated field list. 2nd ed. Golden Gate Audubon Soc., Berkeley. 84pp.
- Stewart, R. M. 1974. California bay-Bishop pine-mixed forest. Page 1037-1038 in W. T. Van Velzen, ed. Thirty-eighth breeding bird census. Am. Birds 28:987-1054.
- Williams, P. L., and W. D. Koenig. 1980. Water dependence of birds in a temperate oak woodland. Auk 97:339-350.